

Understanding Londoners' views on belonging, social isolation and fairness: evidence from The Survey of Londoners

September 2019

GLA Social Policy Analysis Team – City Intelligence Unit



Contents

Summary

1. Introduction
2. Belonging to London
3. Social isolation
4. Fairness
5. Conclusion



Summary

In June the Mayor published the headline findings from the Survey of Londoners, a major new social survey covering topics including Londoners' relationships and participation in society, their experience of the economy and their demographic characteristics.

This report builds on that previous work with findings of in-depth research to understand the drivers of three important social integration outcomes: belonging to London; social isolation; and perceptions of whether London is a fair city.

Belonging to London

- The research finds that some groups of Londoners have a significantly lower rate of belonging to London, including recent arrivals to the city, Londoners who are not proficient in English and private rented tenants.
- The research also finds that specific economic and equalities issues are associated with reduced belonging, but that activities such as interacting with neighbours and attending cultural events are associated with a greater sense of belonging.

Summary (cont'd)

Social isolation

- The research finds that groups of Londoners most at risk of social isolation include those who are not working full-time, BAME and LGBTQ+ Londoners.
- It finds strong links between economic insecurity and social isolation, with food insecurity and fuel poverty significantly associated with a higher likelihood of social isolation.
- Attending cultural events is associated with a reduced likelihood of social isolation.

London as a fair city

- The research suggests that nationality and country of birth have a more important relationship with perceptions of fairness than ethnicity.
- The research also finds that some groups of Londoners are less likely to believe London is fair, including non-religious Londoners and older working Londoners in non-permanent roles.
- Londoners who play sport are more likely to think London is a fair city.

1. Introduction

The Survey of Londoners has collected a wide range of data on adults' relationships, their participation in society and their experience of equalities and economic issues. The Survey has also collected detailed data on Londoners' demographic characteristics.

This report presents new results to understand how Londoners' characteristics and their economic and social integration position are associated with three key social integration outcomes:

- Belonging to London
- Social isolation (defined as not having someone to rely on a lot in an emergency)
- Perceptions of whether London is a fair city

Note: throughout this report, the term 'Londoner' is used to describe an adult aged 16 and over who lives in London.

Social integration outcomes

The Survey of Londoners [headline findings report](#) found that:

- **Four in five Londoners (81 per cent) say they belong to London**
- **27 per cent of Londoners are socially isolated**
- **54 per cent of Londoners think London is a fair city**

Each chapter of this report focuses on one of these outcomes and begins by first summarising the findings presented in the headline report on which groups of Londoners are more or less likely to belong, be socially isolated and to think London is fair.

The chapters go on to present key findings from new research that has modelled how different demographic characteristics interact and are associated with these outcome measures. This allows us to highlight particular intersections of demographic characteristics that are important to understand when thinking about the outcomes of the social integration process.

The full list of characteristics that were tested, and those that were significant, are listed in a separate methodological annex that accompanies this report.

2. Belonging to London

The Survey of Londoners headline report identified several groups of Londoners with rates of belonging to London significantly higher or lower than other groups, including:

- **Londoners who have lived in the city for less than five years:** Sixty-three per cent of Londoners who have lived in London for less than five years feel they belong to the city. By contrast, 89 per cent of those who have always lived in London feel they belong to the city.
- **Londoners of a non-British White ethnic background, for example European Londoners,** exhibit lower rates of belonging to London (74 per cent) than those of a White British ethnic background (80 per cent). Black and Asian Londoners have the highest rates of belonging to London (89 per cent and 85 per cent respectively).
- **Londoners with a non-British nationality** are less likely to belong to London than British Londoners (75 versus 83 per cent respectively).
- Belonging to London is also much lower among **Londoners who are not proficient in English** (66 per cent).

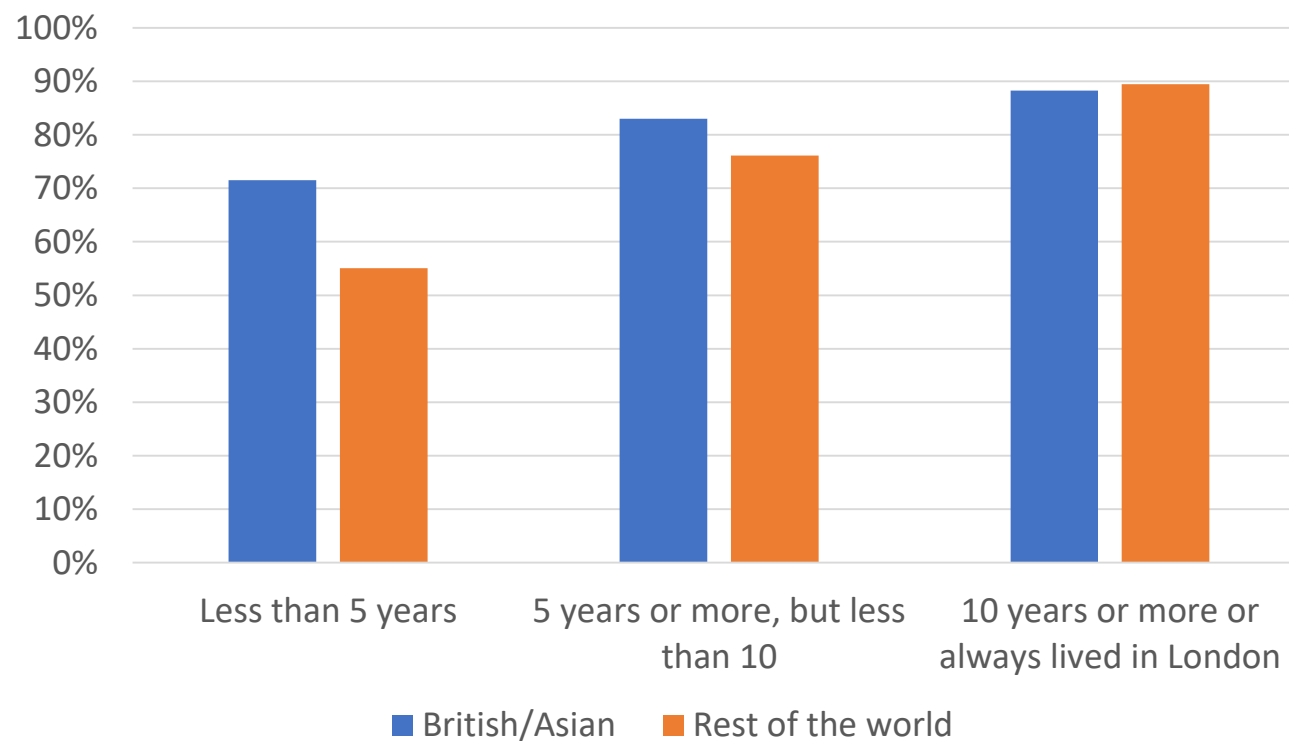
Londoners with a British or Asian nationality have higher rates of belonging

Our initial results found that length of time in London was clearly related to belonging. But further analysis has found that nationality is also important; **Londoners with a British or Asian nationality have higher rates of belonging** (83 per cent versus 74 per cent for nationals from the rest of the world, such as a European or African nationality).

Importantly, among Londoners with a nationality that is not British or Asian, as their length of time living in London increases their rate of belonging is more similar to British and Asian nationals (see chart). The initial difference between the two groups for those who have lived in London less than five years is 17 percentage points.

This suggests that the relationship between nationality and belonging disappears as length of time in London increases.

Belonging to London by nationality and length of time in London (%)



How we investigated other factors behind Londoners' sense of belonging

The Survey of Londoners headline report illustrated that there are lots of different factors that make a person more or less likely to be socially integrated.

The report delved into these different factors and how they related, for example, finding that Londoners who volunteer and are registered to vote are more likely to have a higher sense of belonging. However, with these findings it was unclear if it was the characteristics of those who volunteer compared with those who do not volunteer that was driving these trends.

To understand these relationships better, we have run a series of models looking at our outcomes of interest against a range of social integration and economic factors, while controlling for a range of demographic characteristics (full list of characteristics and factors in the separate methodology annex).

This is particularly important to inform policy development at the GLA, as it tells us where social integration policy could most usefully focus in future to achieve better social integration outcomes.

The other factors that make Londoners more or less likely to feel belonging

The table on this page shows the proportion of Londoners who feel they belong to London, then among those Londoners with each of the factors that were significant from the modelling.

For example, while 81 per cent of Londoners overall report belonging to London, only 74 per cent of Londoners who are in self-reported fuel poverty report belonging.

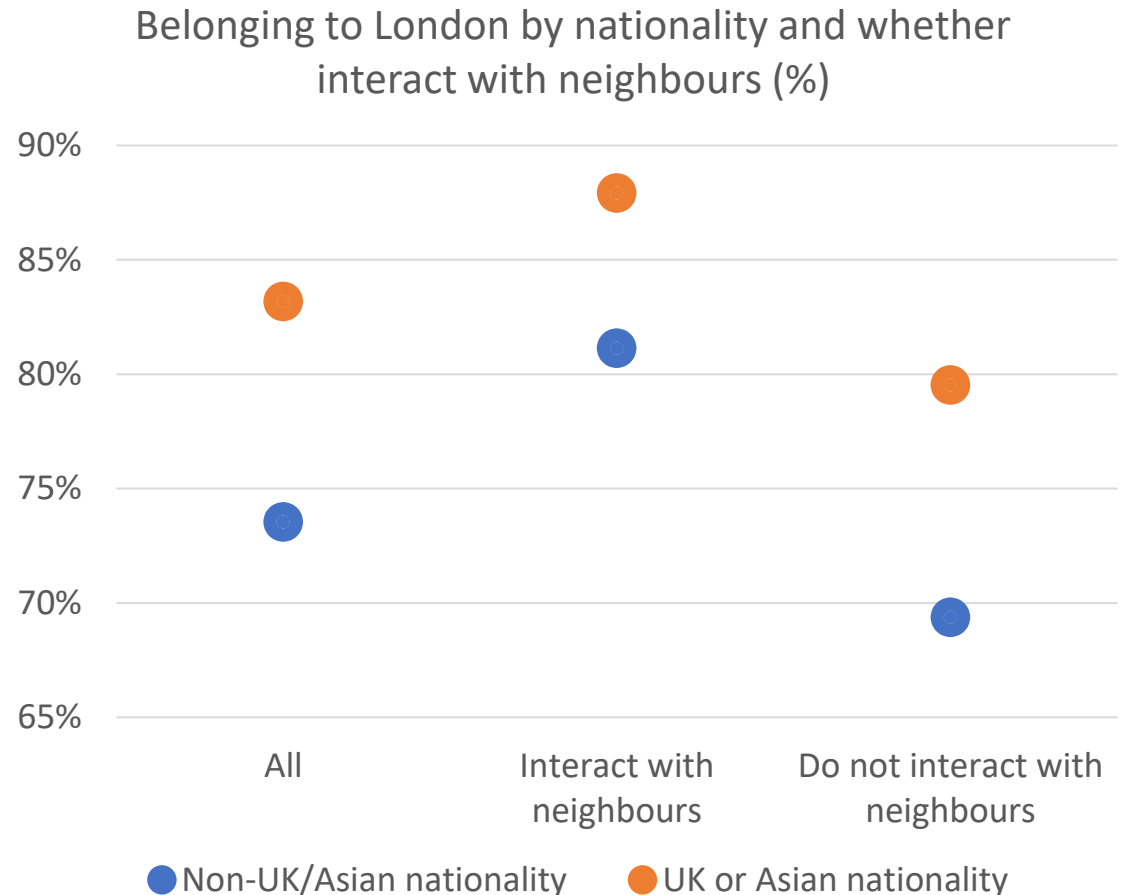
	Proportion who belong to London
All Londoners	81%
Factors associated with higher belonging	
Londoners who are registered to vote	83%
Londoners who interact with their neighbours	86%
Londoners who attend cultural events	84%
Factors associated with lower belonging	
Londoners who have been treated unfairly	78%
Londoners who are in self-reported fuel poverty	74%

Interacting with neighbours is one component of higher belonging

In our descriptive results, we found that Londoners of a White other ethnic background have lower rates of belonging to London.

In our modelling, we found that this group did not have significantly different rates of belonging, but that Londoners of a non-British, non-Asian nationality, such as a European or African nationality, did have lower rates of belonging (74 per cent), when we control for other factors.

Interestingly, **those among this group who interact with their neighbours are much more likely to report belonging to London than those who do not.** This effect is stronger than for UK and Asian nationals (see chart): a 12 percentage point difference compared with eight percentage points for UK and Asian nationals.

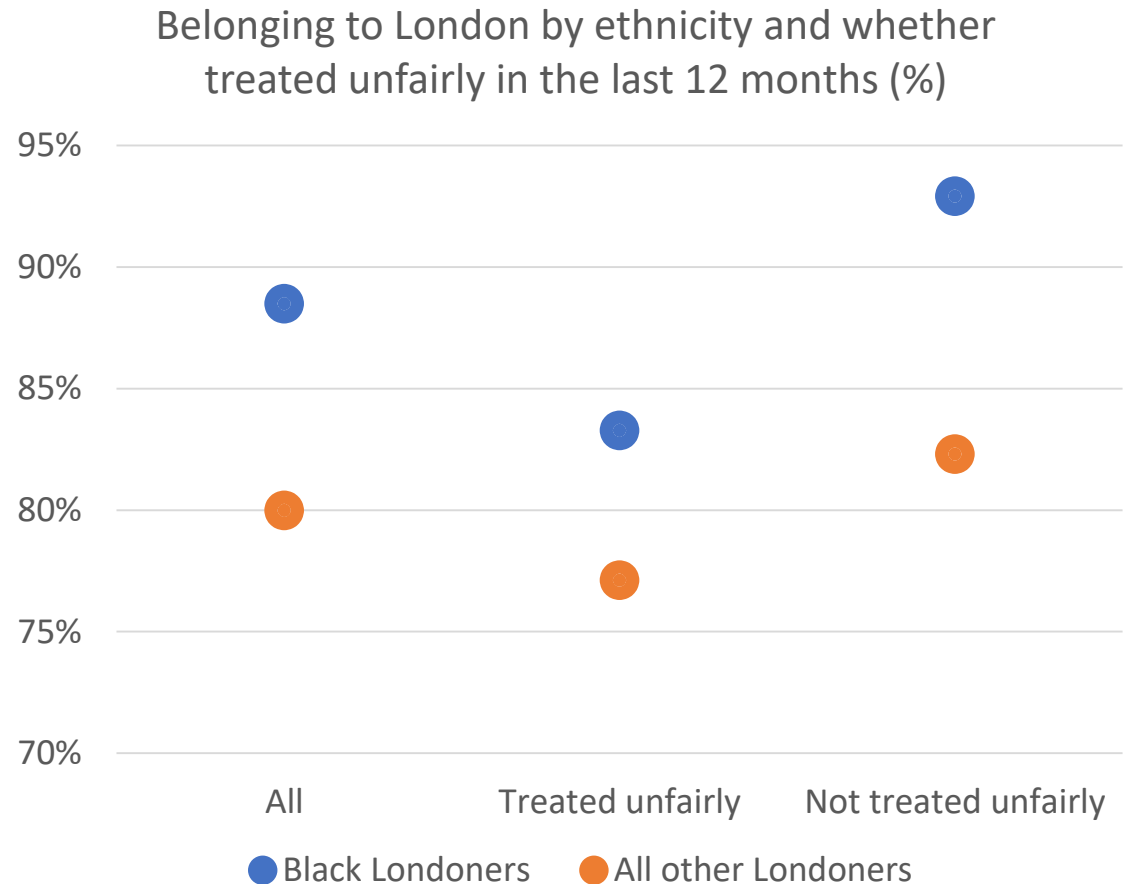


Being treated unfairly is a factor in lower belonging

As noted earlier, **Black Londoners have the highest rate of belonging** (89 per cent), compared to other ethnic groups, and this finding holds true even after controlling for other demographic factors.

Nearly four in ten (38 per cent) **Black Londoners also reported that they were treated unfairly** in the last year because of a protected characteristic they hold, or because of their social class.

This is linked to belonging; **Black Londoners who have been treated unfairly are 10 percentage points less likely to feel they belong to London** than Black Londoners who have not been treated unfairly. This effect is twice as large as compared with all other Londoners.



3. Social isolation

The Survey of Londoners headline report identified several groups of Londoners with rates of social isolation significantly higher than other groups:

- **Social isolation is more common among young Londoners**, with almost a third of 16-24 year-olds (32 per cent) experiencing social isolation and 12 per cent feeling lonely often or always.
- **35 per cent of single Londoners are socially isolated**, versus 15 per cent of those that are in a couple.
- **36 per cent of LGBTQ+ Londoners are socially isolated.**
- **38 per cent of Black Londoners experience social isolation.**

Single Londoners have higher rates of social isolation

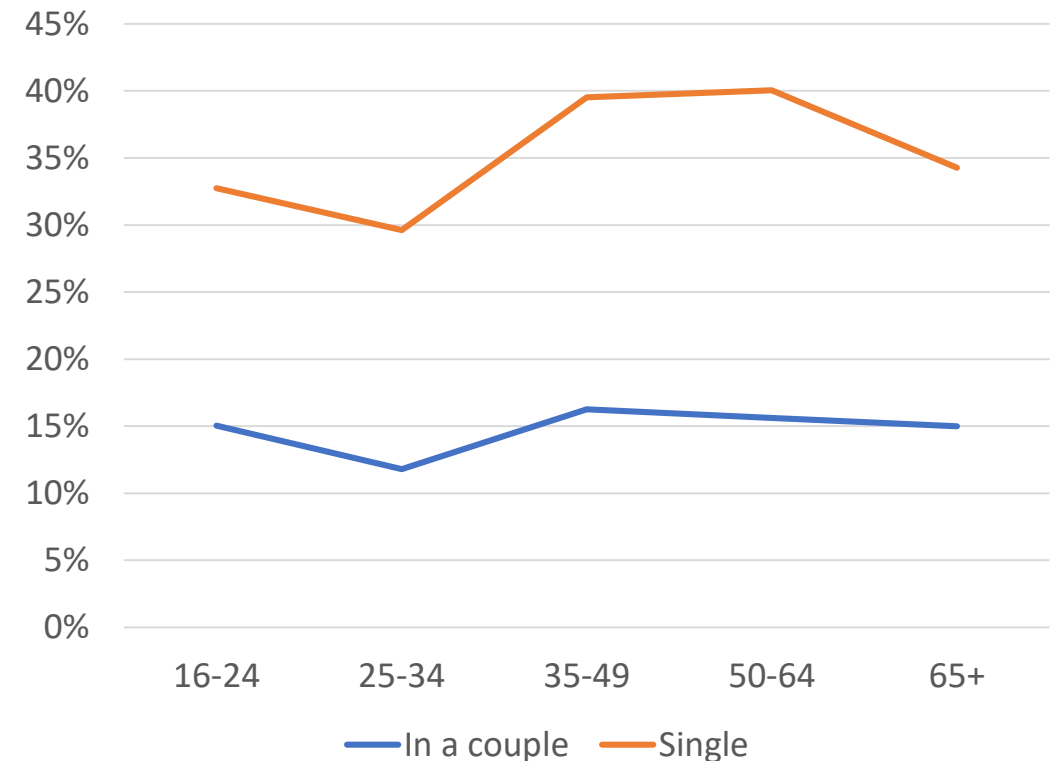
Our descriptive results found that age was significantly related to social isolation, with younger Londoners more likely to be affected.

Our modelled results, however, have found that after controlling for other factors, the relationship between age and isolation is more complex, and other characteristics are more significant.

In particular, relationship status is important: **single Londoners are more than twice as likely to be socially isolated than Londoners in a couple** (35 versus 15 per cent). This is true across age groups (see chart), with isolation among single Londoners particularly high for those aged 35-64.

16-24 year-olds are more likely to be single (85 per cent), compared to less than half of 25-64 year-olds and 55 per cent of Londoners aged 65+.

Social isolation by age and relationship status (%)

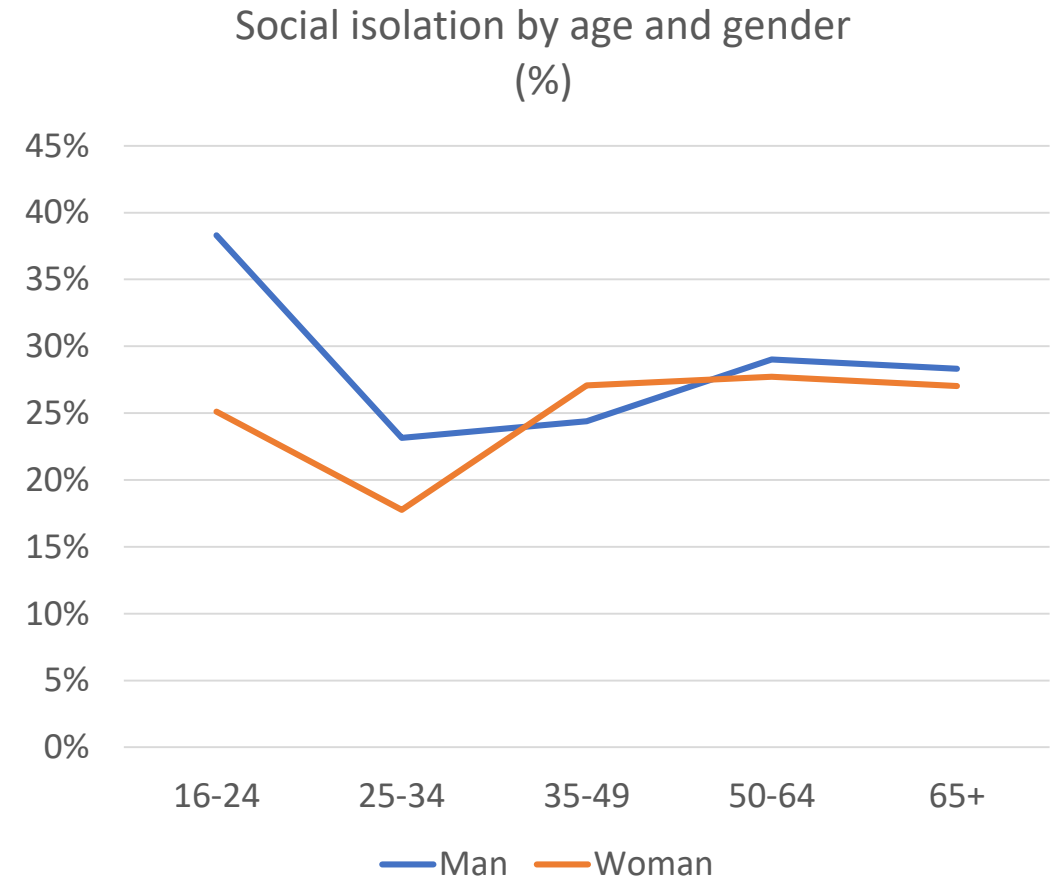


Young men in London have higher rates of social isolation than young women

As mentioned earlier, the descriptive results showed that younger Londoners are more likely to be affected by social isolation.

The effect is not equal among all young Londoners however. **Young men aged 16-24 are particularly socially isolated (38 per cent)** compared with young women (25 per cent).

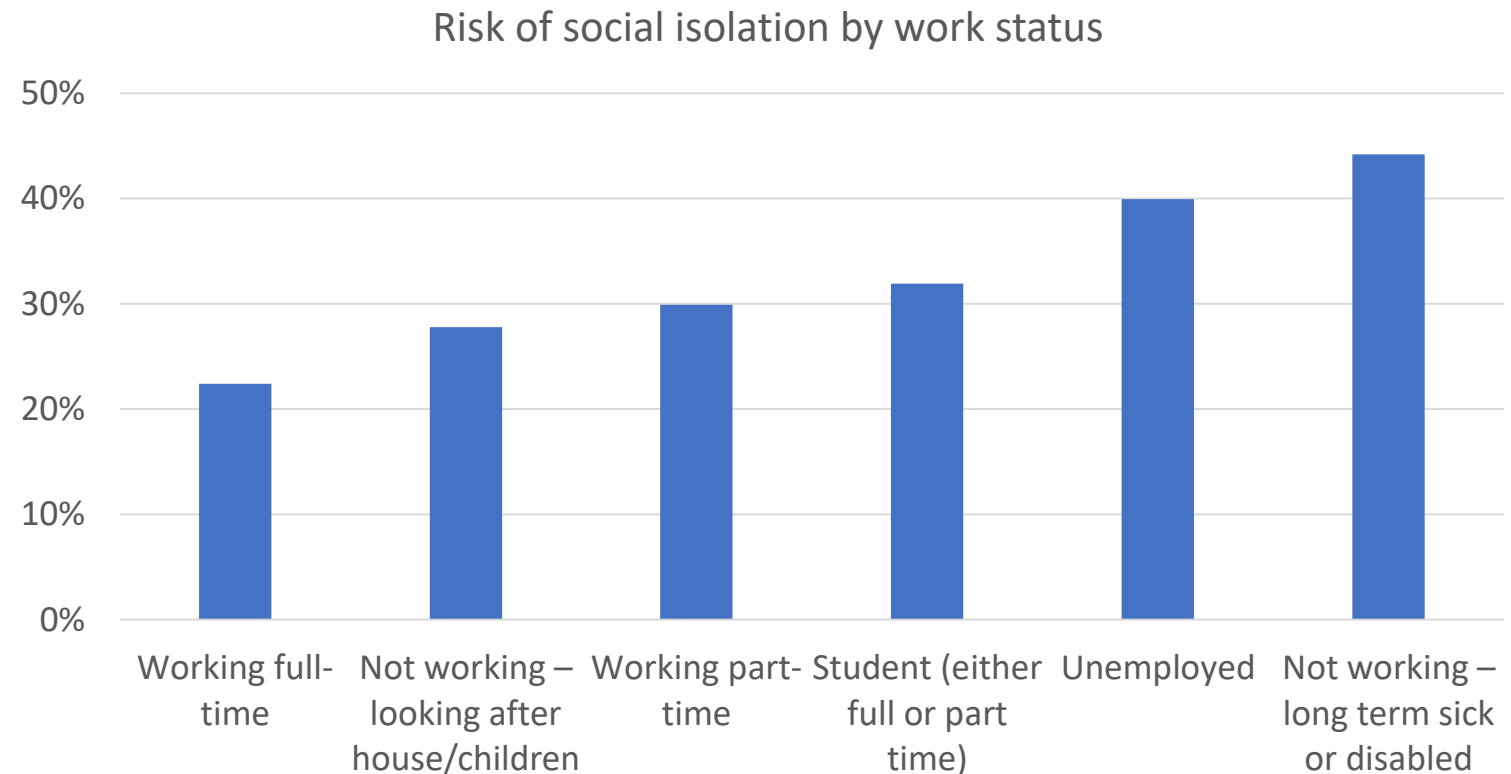
As Londoners get older, the difference between the two genders starts to match up.



Londoners not working full-time are more likely to be socially isolated

Employment status is linked to social isolation risk. 22 per cent of Londoners who work full-time are socially isolated, versus 30 per cent of part-time workers.

Londoners who are out of work also have higher risk of social isolation, particularly those who are unemployed (40 per cent) and those who are not working because of a long term sickness or disability (44 per cent).



The other factors that make Londoners more or less likely to be socially isolated

	Proportion who are socially isolated
All Londoners	27%
Factors associated with lower social isolation	
Londoners who attend cultural events	22%
Factors associated with higher social isolation	
Londoners who are food insecure	45%
Londoners who have been treated unfairly	32%
Londoners who are in self-reported fuel poverty	45%
Londoners who left their last tenancy because of an issue	33%

The table on this page shows the proportion of Londoners who are socially isolated, then among those Londoners with each of the factors that were significant from the modelling.

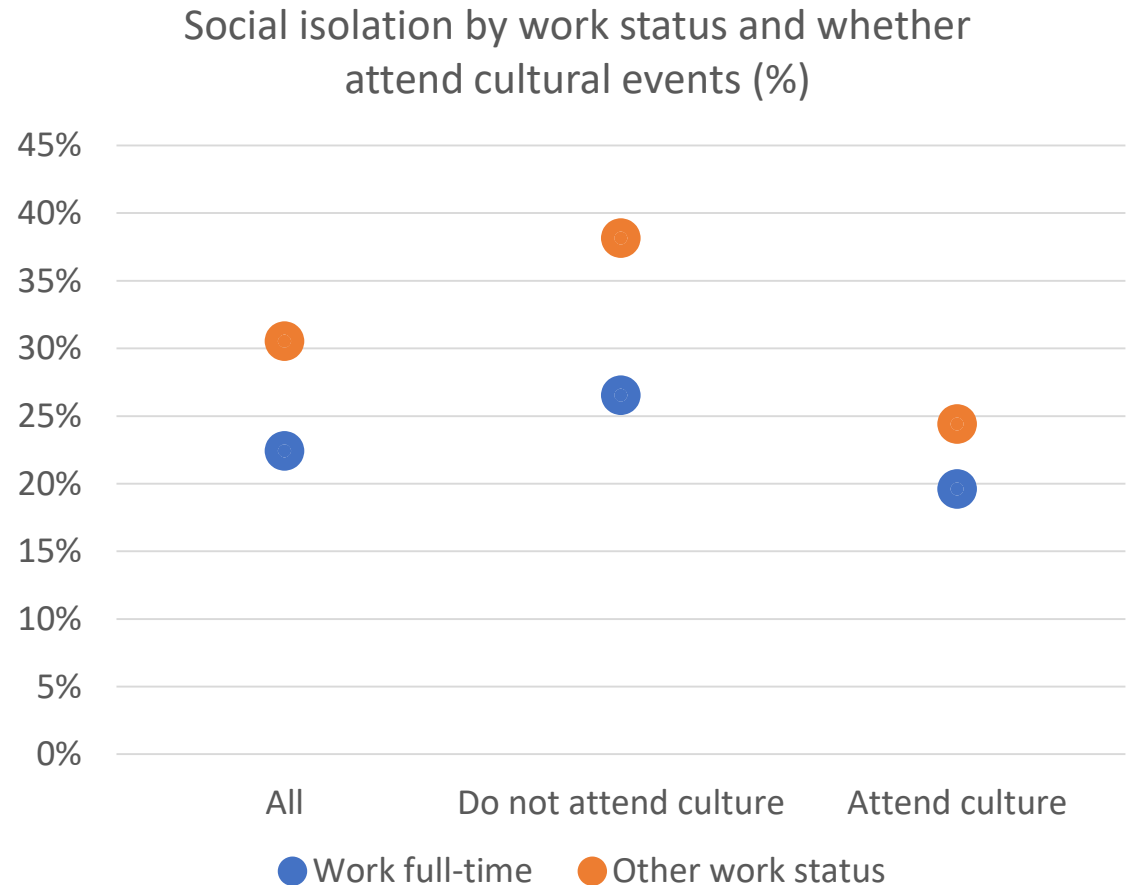
For example, while 27 per cent of Londoners overall are socially isolated, 45 per cent of Londoners who are in self-reported fuel poverty report being socially isolated.

Attending cultural events is associated with lower social isolation

Our modelling found that **Londoners who are not working full-time are more likely to be socially isolated**, and that **attending cultural events is associated with a reduced likelihood of social isolation**.

Among Londoners who are not working full-time, attending cultural events is associated with a fall in the risk of social isolation of around a third, from 38 per cent to 24 per cent.

Among Londoners who work full-time, cultural attendance is associated with a smaller fall in the risk of social isolation, from 27 per cent to 20 per cent (see chart).

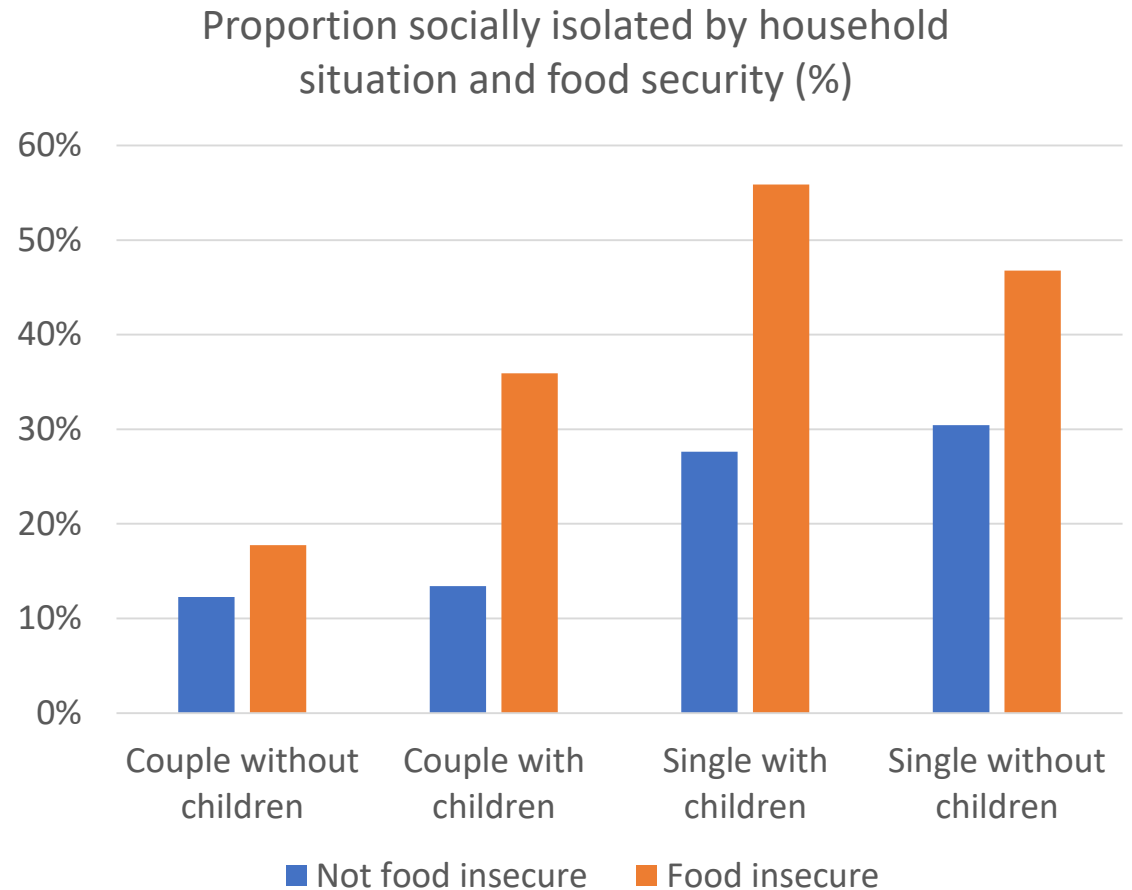


A poorer economic situation is associated with poorer social integration outcomes

Factors related to Londoners' economic position, such as being food insecure or fuel poor, are significantly associated in the modelling with poorer social integration outcomes.

For example, **food insecurity appears to be very closely associated with social isolation**; 45 per cent of food insecure Londoners are socially isolated, versus 22 per cent of Londoners who are not food insecure.

This is the case for both groups more at risk of food insecurity, such as single Londoners, and those less at risk, such as Londoners living in a couple (see chart).



4. Fairness

The Survey of Londoners headline report identified several groups of Londoners more likely to think London is fair compared to other groups, including:

- **A greater proportion of men believe London is fair compared with women** (56 per cent and 51 per cent respectively).
- **Londoners aged 50 and over are the age group most likely to believe London is fair** (58 per cent), and those aged 25-34 the least likely (48 per cent).
- **Around two-thirds (66 per cent) of Asian Londoners believe London is fair** compared with around half (48 per cent) of White British Londoners. **Black Londoners** are also more likely to believe London is fair (59 per cent) compared with White British Londoners.

Black and Asian Londoners born outside the UK have higher rates of believing London is a fair city

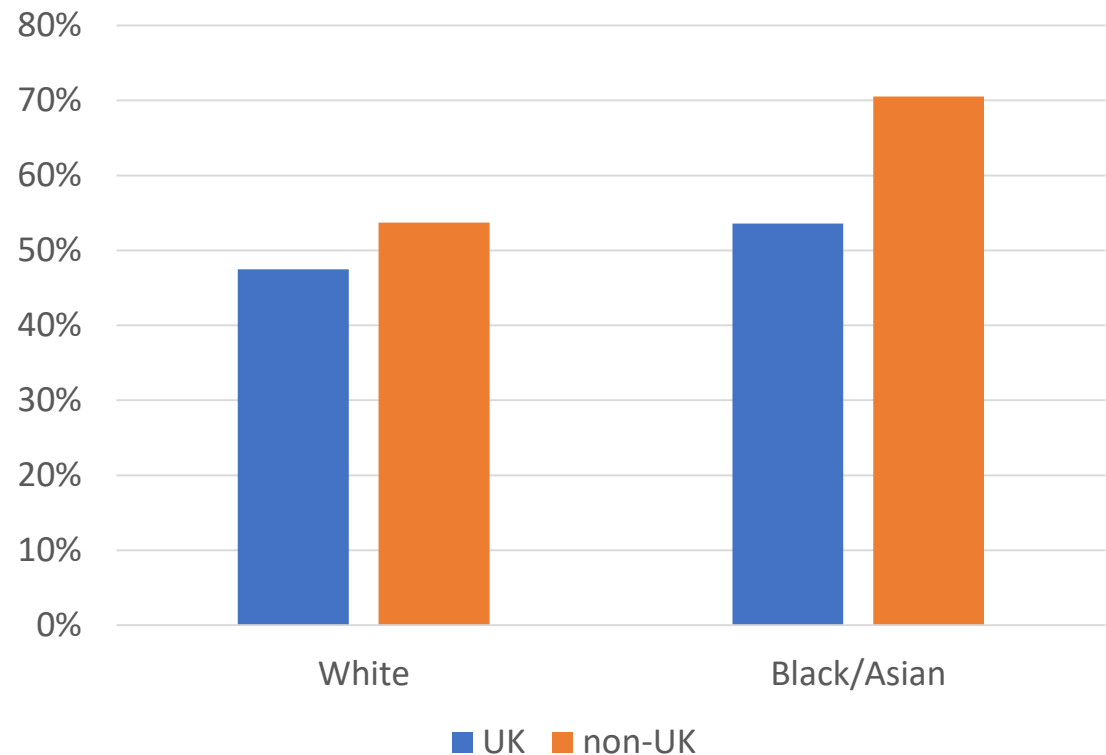
Our descriptive results found that Londoners with an Asian or Black ethnic background are more likely to perceive London is fair.

Our modelled results suggest that **nationality and country of birth have a more important relationship with perceptions of fairness than ethnicity.**

For example, comparing perceptions of fairness by country of birth and ethnicity (see chart), we find **a particularly high proportion of Black and Asian Londoners born outside the UK have a positive perception of London as fair (71 per cent).**

Among Black and Asian Londoners born in the UK, perceptions of fairness are around average (54 per cent).

Proportion who think London is a fair city by ethnicity and country of birth (%)



For older Londoners, working in a non-permanent job reduces the likelihood of perceiving that London is a fair city

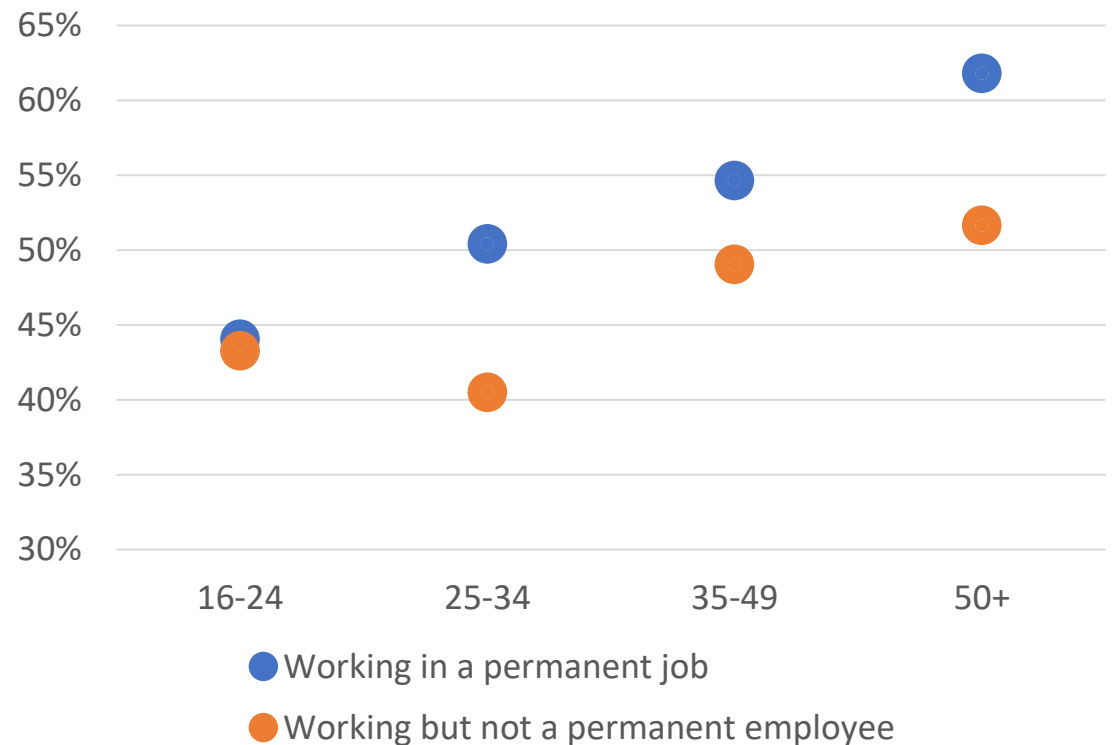
Our descriptive results also found that Londoners aged 50 and over are the age group most likely to believe London is fair and those aged 25-34 the least likely.

Our modelled results suggest that **job type** also plays an important role.

For younger Londoners aged 16-49 and in work it makes no difference on their perceptions of fairness. Although there appear to be visual differences in the chart, they are **not** statistically significant for those age groups.

However, for Londoners aged 50 and over, **working in a non-permanent role reduces their likelihood of perceiving that London is a fair city, compared with those working in permanent jobs** (by 10 percentage points).

Proportion who think London is a fair city by age and type of job contract (%)



The other factors that make Londoners more or less likely to believe London is a fair city

The table on this page shows the proportion of Londoners who believe London is a fair city, then among those Londoners with each of the factors that were significant from the modelling.

For example, while 54 per cent of Londoners overall say London is a fair city, only 44 per cent of Londoners who are in self-reported fuel poverty believe this statement.

	Proportion who say that London is a fair city
All Londoners	54%
Factors associated with a greater belief that London is a fair city	
Londoners who play sport	57%
Londoners who interact with their neighbours	60%
Factors associated with a lower belief that London is a fair city	
Londoners who have been treated unfairly	44%
Londoners who are in self-reported fuel poverty	44%
Londoners who volunteer informally	53%
Londoners who mix frequently by age	49%

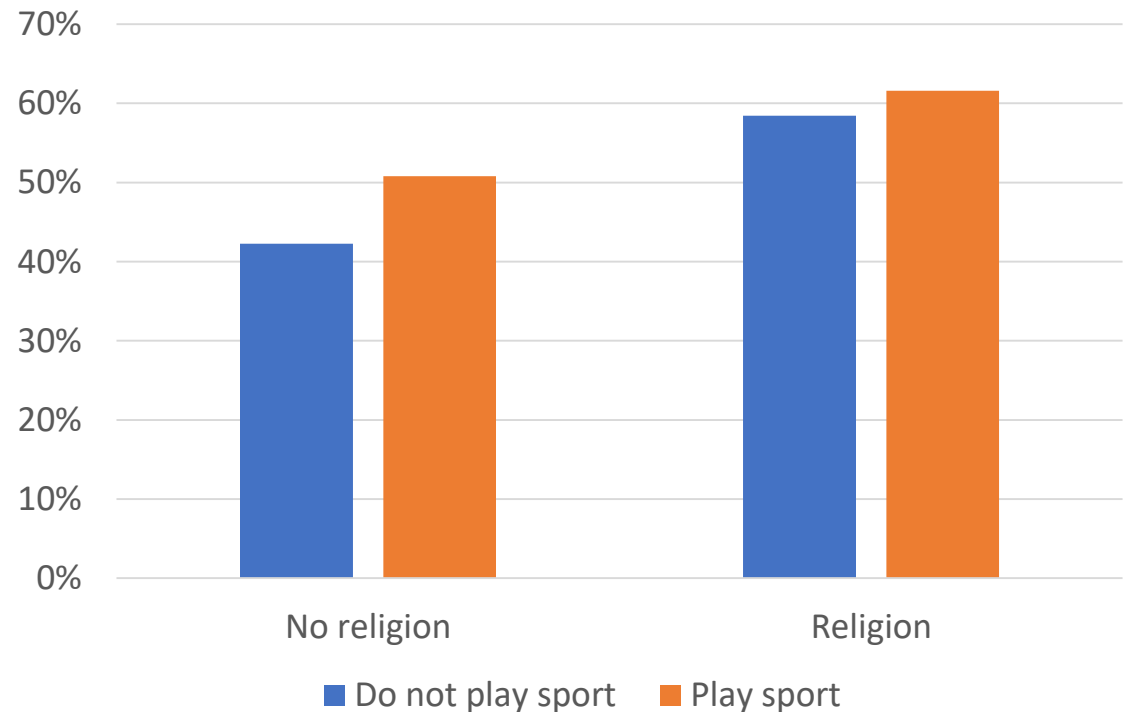
Londoners who play sport are more likely to think London is a fair city

Sport has a significant association with Londoners' perceptions of fairness – **Londoners who play sport are more likely to think London is a fair city.**

The modelling also found that respondents' religion had a significant association with perceptions of fairness; Londoners with no religion are less likely to think London is fair (45 versus 59 per cent among religious Londoners).

Among non-religious Londoners, those who play sport are nine percentage points more likely to think London is fair than those who do not (51 versus 42 per cent). This increase is greater than between religious Londoners who do and do not play sport (see chart).

Proportion of respondents who think London is fair by sports participation and whether religious (%)





Conclusion

This report has provided additional analysis of how Londoners' characteristics, their economic situation and their relationships, participation and experience of equalities issues interact to influence their overall social integration outcomes.

Aside from the specific findings presented, the research supports the Mayor's 'All of Us' approach to social integration: it is not just Londoners' ethnicity, age or other characteristics, or their experience of the economy, that determines whether they feel they belong, are socially isolated or their attitudes towards fairness. Instead, social integration is a complex process in which Londoners' participation in activities such as culture and sport and their relationships can mitigate the impact of issues such as food insecurity and unfair treatment on their overall social integration.

The findings of this research, along with other on-going analysis of The Survey of Londoners, are being used to inform the development of social integration initiatives at the GLA, helping us to understand which interventions might be most effective and which groups of Londoners could benefit most from.